

Why do so many people in the world live in megacities?

village -> town -> city -> megacity

Key Vocabulary	
Village	A group of houses and associated buildings, smaller than a town, situated in a rural area.
Town	A built-up area with a name and defined boundaries that is larger than a village and smaller than a city.
City	An area in which many people usually live fairly close together. Cities usually have their own separate governments and systems for maintaining and providing utilities and transportation.
Megacity	A city with a population of over 10 million people.
Capital City	A place where the government is located.
Urban	The urban area is the region surrounding a city.
Urbanisation	The proportion of people living in an urban area is increasing compared to the number of people living in a rural area.
Inhabitant	A person that lives in a place.
Birth rate	The number of live births each year per thousand of the population in an area.
Migration	The movement of people into or out of a city.
Overpopulated	Too many inhabitants for the area.
Population density	A way of showing how crowded a place is. It is calculated by dividing the population by the area.
Urban challenges	The problems typical of urban areas.
Push/pull factors	Reasons why people move to, or away from, an area.
Economy	The economy is the way a certain place (often a country) makes things, offers services, and divides stuff up between people, usually using money.
Cost of living	Cost of living is the cost of maintaining a certain standard of living.
Congestion	A situation in which an area is too blocked or crowded by people or traffic.

Below are the top 10 megacities (2023). This list changes slightly year on year.

Largest World Cities by Population

2023 Metro Area Rankings

Rank	City	Country	Population
1	Tokyo	Japan	37,194,000
2	Delhi	India	32,941,000
3	Shanghai	China	29,211,000
4	Dhaka	Bangladesh	23,210,000
5	Sao Paulo	Brazil	22,620,000
6	Mexico City	Mexico	22,281,000
7	Cairo	Egypt	22,183,000
8	Beijing	China	21,766,000
9	Mumbai	India	21,297,000
10	Osaka	Japan	19,013,000

Most of the megacities listed are on the continent of Asia.

Interestingly, so was the very first megacity, Baghdad. Baghdad is the capital city of Iraq, located in Western Asia.

There are currently 34 megacities in the world.

In the UK, we only have one megacity. London has a population of 14.8 million – not enough to be in the top 10.



The key features of a megacity include tall buildings packed tightly together and an extensive transport system.



Many factors affect the growth of mega cities. We call these push / pull factors.

Pull factors are reasons that encourage people to move to an area. These could include: the chance of a better job or education, or a higher standard of living.
Push factors are reasons people move away from an area. These could include: unemployment, low wages, high crime rates or a lack of essential services.

Push Factors	Pull Factors
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not enough jobs 2. Pollution 3. High crime rate 4. Poor climate 5. Poor quality medical care 6. Inadequate living conditions 7. Lack of services 8. High risk of natural hazards 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More job opportunities 2. Clean air 3. Low crime rate 4. Good climate 5. High quality medical care 6. Better living conditions 7. Many services 8. Low risk of natural hazards